

North Star Montessori Academy
3030 Wright Street
Marquette, MI 49855

Proposed Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 24th, 2022
5:15 p.m.

North Star Montessori Academy-Cultivating blended learning and success by inspiring every child in a student-centered community.

Board Members: Roger Zappa, Lydia Bucklin, Jessica Danek, ~~Kara Green~~,
Melissa Bowers

NMU: Betty LaPointe, NMU Charter Schools Office

“This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Directors in public for the purpose of conducting the School’s business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as inducted in the agenda”

1. Call to Order: Melissa Bowers called the regular NSMA Board meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.
2. Roll Call - Board of Directors present: Melissa Bowers, Roger Zappa, Lydia Bucklin, Jessica Danek. Quorum reached.
3. Others Present: Andrea Ballard, Angela Chang, Betty LaPointe, *Mary VanderMollen*
4. Agenda Adoption:
 - a) Motion by Roger Zappa, supported by Lydia Bucklin to approve the agenda as presented. Unanimous approval. Motion passed.
5. Public Comment: Kara Green was present to discuss our current peanut policy. Kara shared her daughter has a restricted diet, with peanut butter being one of the few sources of protein she consumes. She asked that we review the policy to allow for peanut products to be consumed or for clearer guidelines to be shared in regards to what nut products are allowed. The board opened discussion regarding the topic. The administration said peanut allergy families were reached out to about their children’s allergy severity and concerns over the policy. They were comfortable with lessening the restriction. If the policy was altered, no child can be segregated due to allergy or disability and those families of students with allergies would need to sign a waiver. It was requested the topic be presented on the next agenda for further conversation and action if necessary.

Consent Agenda

1. a) Approval of proposed minutes from the June 22, 2022 meeting
b) Approval of July financial statements and July bills for payment.
- Motion by Jessica Danek, supported by Lydia Bucklin, to approve the consent agenda. Vote: Unanimous approval. Motion passed.

Action Items

1. Approval of 2022-2023 Curriculum Guide
 - Motion by Roger Zappa, supported by Lydia Bucklin, to approve the 2022-2023 Curriculum Guide. Unanimous approval. Motion passed.
2. Approval of 2022-2023 Student Handbook
 - Motion by Lydia Bucklin, supported by Jessica Danek, to approve the 2022-2023 Student Handbook. Unanimous approval. Motion passed.
3. Approval of 2022-2023 MARESA SPED contract
 - Motion by Lydia Bucklin, supported by Jessica Danek, to approve the 2022-2023 MARESA SPED contract. Unanimous approval. Motion passed.
4. Approval of new hire contracts
 - a. Iris Pacelt - 4th/5th-grade teacher
 - b. Cristina Ferrier - Part-time special-ed teacher
 - c. Julie Kostich-Connors - Guidance counselor
 - d. Alexandra Bott - Middle/High School science teacher
 - e. Alexandra Riley - Declined Spanish teacher position. No longer requires approval of hire.
 - Motion by Roger Zappa, supported by Jessica Danek, to approve Iris Pacelt, Cristina Ferrier, Julie Kostich-Connors, and Alexandra Bott as new hire contracts. Unanimous approval. Motion passed.

Reports/Discussion

1. **Superintendent/principal Report:** Andrea Ballard reported that the administration is moving along nicely with getting on the same page before school begins and that the board work session on Monday spurred good dialogue. The teachers have two full days next week for professional development. They are hopeful it will be positive and that the topics will provide a platform for the rest of the year. Besides that, all that is left is getting spaces ready for the start of school. They are waiting to see how enrollment pans out, as we are budgeted for 195 students and are currently at that number. We made fiscal choices to help with lower enrollment and are still full in the classes we have. Preschool has 16, possibly 17, and enrolled, Kindergarten has 23 students. 55 students enrolled in 1st-3rd, 42 in 4-5th, 40 in middle school, and 35 in high school. They've hired a second full-time classroom aide, and another full-time aide today, and are attempting to hire another floating substitute to assist with anticipated difficulties with finding substitutes. They reached out to Checker about using their services for planned field trips throughout the year. It wasn't an option, as Checker said they are no longer offering school bussing. Andrea said they will reach out to MAPS to see if they can help with transportation for field trips. NSMA is offering Montessori training for all on-staff teachers to become certified. It is self-paced and costs \$3000, which will be covered through a grant from the NMU's Charter Schools Office. The contract to have the training paid for this year asks for staff to commit to one more year of service to us or the training would have to be paid back. Most of our teachers, except for three, have signed up for the training. This training will better help support our

students in the classrooms and with the overall direction of our school as a Montessori public school.

2. **Elementary Principal Report:** Angela Chang brought up the carpool to school app and reported 20 families enrolled. Now that people are logging in, they will set up parent training for using the app. There is an ice cream social event scheduled on Sept 29th from 4 to 5 pm.
3. **NMU Charter School Office report:** Betty LaPointe welcomed Mary Vandermolten. The Charter office is working on an incentive for watching the Angie Irwin podcast. The leader and staff workshop is on October 16th and 17th, Sunday and Monday, for administrators. CSO will pay for three individuals to attend the MAPSA conference in Detroit on December 7th and 8th.

Announcements

1. **Next meeting:** Wednesday, September 28th, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
2. **Public comment:** None
3. **Board member comment:** Melissa Bowers said she will attend next Tuesday's professional development to allow for a board presence. Lydia Bucklin volunteered to attend September's half-day professional development day. Jessica Danek will attend student council meetings as well. Melissa and Jessica will be at Welcome Back Night for the NSMA school board and PTO recruitment. Both Lydia and Roger had people interested in volunteering for the board, but those individuals didn't apply. Lydia and Roger will follow up. There was deliberation over restructuring board subcommittee meetings to combine into one monthly meeting, due to topic redundancy and having a minimal amount of board members. Roger reminded us of the open meetings act and by making that change, we would need to follow those guidelines. It was decided, that instead of holding monthly subcommittee meetings, we'd increase board discussion during our regularly scheduled public meetings. During that exchange came concerns over High School enrollment and retaining Middle School students. It was considered necessary to hold a special meeting to discuss the direction of the district. An email with a list of dates will be sent out to see what would work best for all members and then posted publicly.
4. **Motion to adjourn** by Lydia Bucklin, supported by Jessica. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

NOTICE: The location of the meeting provides barrier-free access to all persons. Persons needing assistance should call North Star Montessori Academy (906) 226-0156 approximately 1 hour before the meeting is scheduled.

Official minutes of the school board meetings are stored in the school's business office and available for public inspection eight days after a meeting as proposed minutes and five days after the meeting at which they are approved.



Jessica Danek, NSMA Board Secretary

9/28/22

Date Approved

